



agency for science and higher education

**REPORT
OF THE EXPERT PANEL
ON THE
RE-ACCREDITATION OF
LIBERTAS INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY**

**Date of site visit:
20 – 21 November 2019**

December, 2019



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INTRODUCTION

The Agency for Science and Higher Education (the Agency) is an independent legal entity with public authority, registered in the court register, and a full member of the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) and European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

All public and private higher education institutions are subject to re-accreditation, which is conducted in five-year cycles by the Agency, in accordance with the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education (Official Gazette 45/09) and subordinate regulations, and by following *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG) and good international practice in quality assurance of higher education and science.

The Agency's Accreditation Council appointed an independent Expert Panel for the evaluation of Libertas International University.

Members of the Expert Panel:

- Univ. - Prof. Dr. Sc. Dr. h.c. Irena Zavrl, PhD, FH Burgenland, University of Applied Sciences, Austria, Panel chair,
- Prof. dr. sc. Stipan Janković, University Department of Health Studies, University of Split, Croatia,
- Assoc. prof. dr. Boštjan Udovič, Faculty of Social Sciences University of Ljubljana, Slovenia
- Asst. prof. dr. sc. Nataša Antulov, MA Dramaturgy, Academy of Applied Arts, University of Rijeka, Croatia,
- Jakov Tadić, student, Faculty of Economics, University of Split, Croatia, student.

During the site visit, the Expert Panel held meetings with the following stakeholders:

- Management,
- Self-evaluation Report Committee,
- Students,
- Heads of study programmes,
- Full-time teaching staff,
- Vice-rector for science and international cooperation,
- Representatives of the alumni, business sector, potential employers.

The Expert Panel members had a tour of the library, IT classroom, student administration office and classrooms, office for international cooperation and attended sample lectures, where they held a brief Q&A session with students.

In accordance with the site visit protocol, the Expert Panel examined the available additional documents and study programme descriptions (learning outcomes).

The Expert Panel drafted this Report on the re-accreditation of Libertas International University on the basis of Libertas International University self-evaluation report, other relevant documents and site visit.

The Report contains the following elements:

- Short description of the evaluated higher education institution,
- Brief analysis of the institutional advantages and disadvantages,
- List of institutional good practices,
- Analysis of each assessment area, recommendations for improvement and quality grade for each assessment area,
- Detailed analysis of each standard, recommendations for improvement and quality grade for each standard,
- Appendices (quality assessment summary by each assessment area and standard, and site visit protocol),
- Summary.

In the analysis of the documentation, site visit to the Libertas International University and writing of the Report, the Expert Panel was supported by:

- MSc Sandra Bezjak, coordinator, ASHE,
- Josip Hrgović, PhD, assistant coordinator, ASHE,
- Mirjana Gopić, observer, ASHE.

On the basis of the re-accreditation procedure conducted, and with the prior opinion of the Accreditation Council, the Agency issues a following accreditation recommendation to the Minister for Higher Education and Science:

1. **issuance of a confirmation on compliance with the requirements** for performing the activities, or parts of the activities
2. **denial of license** for performing the activities, or parts of the activities
3. **issuance of a letter of expectation** with the deadline for resolving deficiencies of up to three years. A letter of expectation can include the suspension of student enrolment within a set period.

The accreditation recommendation also includes a quality grade of a higher education institution, and recommendations for quality improvement.

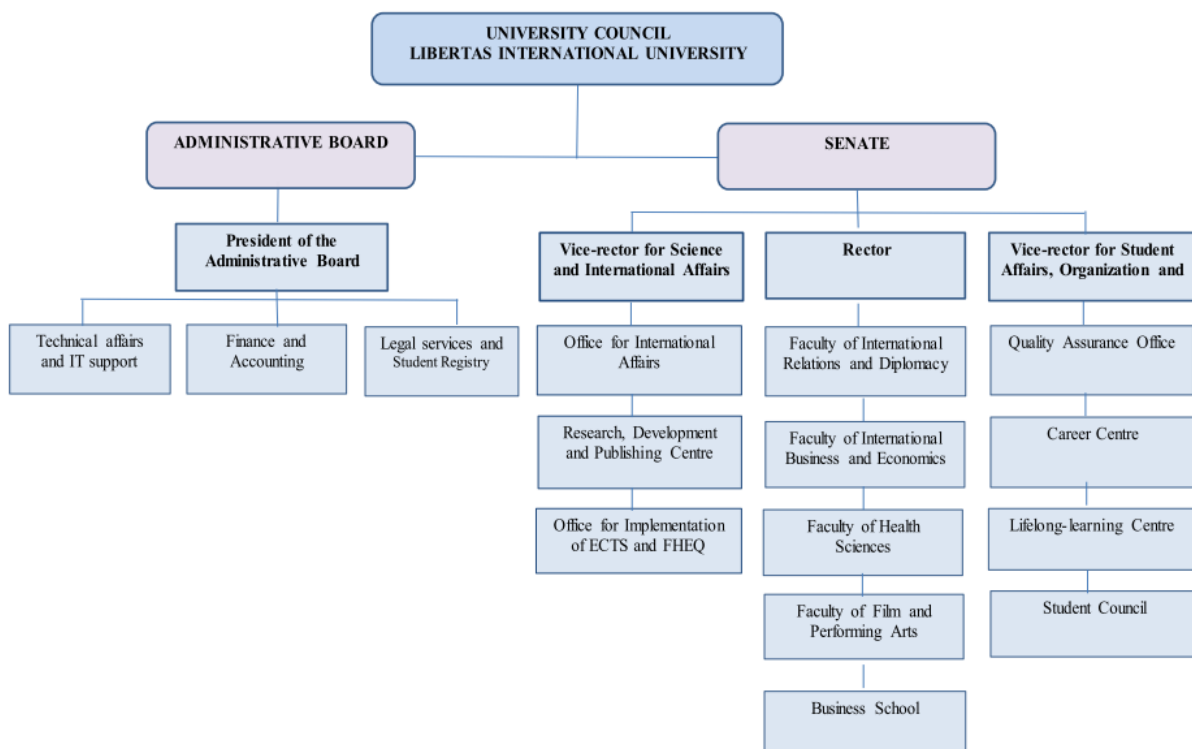
SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

NAME OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION: Libertas International University

ADDRESS: Trg J. F. Kennedy 6b

RECTOR: Prof. Duško Pavlović, PhD

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE:



STUDY PROGRAMMES:

- undergraduate university study programme International Relations
- undergraduate study programme International Business
- undergraduate study programme Physical Therapy
- undergraduate university study programme Acting
- undergraduate professional study programme Business Economy
- undergraduate professional study programme Tourism and Hotel Management
- undergraduate professional study programme Business Security Management
- undergraduate professional study programme Sports Management

- graduate study programme International Relations and Diplomacy
- graduate study programme Business Economics and Globalisation
- graduate professional study programme Domestic and International Trade Management
- graduate professional study programme Banking, Insurance and Financial Management
- graduate professional study programme Tourism and Hotel Management
- postgraduate study programme International Relations (PhD)
- postgraduate specialist study programme Quality management in Health Care

NUMBER OF STUDENTS:

- 1 400 full-time students
- 1 331 part-time students

NUMBER OF TEACHERS:

- 45 teachers appointed to research-teaching grades
- 30 teachers appointed to teaching grades

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

Libertas International University, the first private university in the Republic of Croatia, was founded in 2008 under the name of International University of Dubrovnik. The headquarters of the University were in Sv. Dominik 4, in Dubrovnik. In 2010 the university changed its name to DIU International University. In 2013 the founders of DIU International University and Libertas Business School made a strategic deal, according to which the name of the university was changed to DIU Libertas International University and changes in foundation structure were made. By the end of that year, the head office of the University was moved to Zagreb, Trg, J. F. Kennedy 6b. In 2016 Libertas Business School was merged with Libertas International University and since then, it has been a university department. Along with the Business School, there are Faculty of International Relations and Diplomacy, Faculty of International Business and Economics, Faculty of Film and Performing Arts and Faculty of Health Sciences.

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE INSTITUTIONAL ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

ADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION

1. Recommendations from the previous accreditation have been almost entirely implemented
2. An excellent combination of theory and practice
3. Study programmes are non-standardized and tailor-made, they need to be updated and continuously aligned with the labour market
4. The HEI is not very large, therefore the study programmes can be more easily adapted to the labour market
5. The Management understands the shortcomings, appreciates suggestions for improvement, and implements activities based on previous evaluations
6. Students are involved in research activities

DISADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION

1. There is room for improvement; especially regarding internationalization and the mobility of both students and teachers, which is a major disadvantage and needs to be improved by the next accreditation process
2. The majority of teachers' publications are in Croatian; the number of foreign-language publications in recognized, highly-ranked international journals (SSDCI, SCOPUS, AHCI indexed) should be increased
3. It is necessary to introduce **compulsory** learning of foreign languages, especially in International Relations and Diplomacy, where at least (!!) two foreign languages should be included in the compulsory syllabus.
4. Increase student and teacher mobility (internationalization/mobility)
5. Compulsory student practice should be introduced
6. Courses in foreign/English language should be introduced (not only in Dubrovnik, but also in Zagreb)
7. State Matura exam results should be used as a basis for student enrolment
8. Examination objectivity should be ensured (possibly introduce approbation)
9. More than 50% should be required for a positive grade on an exam (at the international level, it is usually 65–70%)
10. Attention should be paid to lifelong learning

LIST OF INSTITUTIONAL GOOD PRACTICES

Internal cohesiveness, teaching staff's loyalty to the institution, support from the Management

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

1. A rulebook on A category publishing
2. Critical self-assessment of teachers
3. Taking care of student employment
4. Investing into additional infrastructure (new premises, equipment)
5. Use of plagiarism software
6. A new evaluation system according to research outcomes
7. Efforts to reduce tuition fees

ANALYSIS OF EACH ASSESSMENT AREA, RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT AND QUALITY GRADE FOR EACH ASSESSMENT AREA

I. Internal quality assurance and the social role of the higher education institution

Analysis

The Libertas University, the first Croatian private university, has made several efforts to make the internal and external quality assurance effective, involving students, alumni, and external experts from the professional field in the processes of internal and external quality monitoring. The institution oversees the quality of their own educational activities continuously and on their own initiative.

Recommendations for improvement

- The institution should monitor regularly continuous professional development of all employees and their work performance.
- More cross-border co-operation (not only western Balkan countries) with foreign European institutions is recommended to increase the mobility (incoming, but also outgoing) of students and teachers.
- According to the available capacities of the University itself, more attention should be paid to organisation of various workshops, special tailor-made lectures to meet societal needs, to organisation of panel discussions and round tables, opened to the broader public.
- The University should focus on organizing events for popularisation of science.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality.

II. Study programmes

Analysis

Study programmes are adequate. However, there are some challenges that could/should be solved. The first issue is that more students with the state graduation (Matura) exam should enrol into University programmes. Secondly, programmes should be more inter-connected. This would lead to a clearer spill over among competences and learning outcomes. Thirdly, especially in the programme of International Relations and International Management, we would claim more compulsory courses of languages (at least two), which serve as a tool for job-seekers.

Recommendations for improvement

- Include compulsory languages to all study programmes;
- Develop cross-programme activities that would enhance competences of students.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality.

III. Teaching process and student support

Analysis

The teaching process is adequate and students are satisfied with the process. As already pointed out in other issues, we would support the idea to strengthen the involvement of students in the teaching process.

Recommendations for improvement

- Include ex-students (now working) in the teaching process.
- Develop study visits to state institutions, especially in the programme of Diplomacy and International Relations.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality.

IV. Teaching and institutional capacities

Analysis

Libertas University has a sufficient number of full-time teachers and an appropriate ratio of students and full-time teachers, which is a definite improvement from the previous re-accreditation. Teacher recruitment procedures are in line with current legal regulations and internal acts. The HEI encourages evaluation and improvement of teaching competencies through the efforts of the University's Management and the overall assessment of the teaching quality. The infrastructural facilities of the University are optimal (space, equipment, IT infrastructure, Office for Student Affairs, Career Centre, teacher infrastructure standards, modern software for the implementation of the entire teaching and administrative processes, etc.).

Recommendations for improvement

Since the HEI is young and small, and the first private university in the Republic of Croatia, it is understandable that at this stage of its development there are certain shortcomings, which is why the Panel recommends, based on the basic requirements of this chapter, the following measures:

- In order to ensure adequate competencies and learning outcomes for students, it is necessary to accelerate the admission into the permanent employment of research-teaching staff selected in the basic research-teaching field to which certain courses belong (especially in Physiotherapy). In doing so, seek to recruit teaching staff of younger age groups.
- When recruiting, give much more priority to candidates with proven research results according to measurable quality criteria.

- In line with the further development of the University and the introduction of new technologies, continually increase all University resources while considering the number of students, and ensure lasting self-sustainability.
- Given the perceived relative lack of “general” or common courses that are inherent to the university education of health professionals, and probably other study programmes of the University, it is recommended that students are offered more such elective courses.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality.

V. Scientific/artistic activity

Analysis

The level of scientific activity meets the minimum standards. The main problem is the lack of publication in the top-quality publications. In the case of SSCI/WOS/AHCI publications, Libertas meets the average of Croatia (which is not impressive!), and in all other categories Libertas is far below the Croatian level. For the scientific excellence, it is necessary to publish as much as possible in top-ranked journals. We acknowledge that SSCI/SCOPUS journals are not the only top journals, but from the perspective of dissemination, we recommend to publish more in English. The second issue is the inclusion in international projects. Here the level is also low, but some measures were already adopted to enhance the intra-university and inter-university cooperation. We urge that Libertas should invest more efforts to encourage the application of international projects and cross-border cooperation in all fields.

Recommendations for improvement

1. Enhance the coupling with international authorship that will help to increase the publication in top journals
2. Increase the visibility of professors from Libertas in media, public opinion activities etc.
3. A greater embeddedness in international projects.

Quality grade

Minimum level of quality.

DETAILED ANALYSIS OF EACH STANDARD, RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT AND QUALITY GRADE FOR EACH STANDARD

I. Internal quality assurance and the social role of the higher education institution

1.1. The higher education institution has established a functional internal quality assurance system.

Analysis

The Libertas University is permanently following the procedures of implementing new standards into the quality system. Since the beginning of 2018, the University has been participating in the workshops of the network of quality assurance system units at higher education institutions in the Republic of Croatia (CroQAnet), organized by the Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE).

Internal quality assurance system, established by the university, encompasses and evaluates all activities of the university, such as study programmes, teaching process, student support, support of vulnerable students, teaching and studying resources, scientific and artistic activities, professional activities, etc. The internal quality assurance system is substantiated through the following documents: University Strategy, Quality policy, Ordinance on Quality Assurance System, Quality Manual, Quality Committee half-yearly reports, Quality Committee annual reports.

Already in 2014, the Executive Board of the University passed a general University Strategy 2014-2020, which covers the period up to the year 2020 for all areas of the University's development, and early in 2019, the Senate adopted a new strategy for the period of 2020–2026. Based on the SWOT and according to some recommendations from the previous accreditation process, the University tries to adapt and to prepare continuous and dynamic enhancement of quality and its social role, to change and complete the existing study programmes, but also to adopt new ones, to upgrade the teaching process and student support, to upgrade and develop teaching and institutional capacities in order to achieve the higher quality.

In 2019, the University Senate adopted a new five-year Strategic scientific research programme, valid for the period of 2019-2023. Its main objective is to increase the quality and quantity of scientific research activities, which is already defined by the university strategy of 2014-2020. This programme represents the framework of not

only the indicators of research activities, but also the list of scientific subjects and research fields.

The criteria and measures for quality assessment and enhancement in scientific, educational, and professional activities have been established in accordance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), and with particularities of the university scientific, educational and professional processes and the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education.

Quality Assurance Board, established as a Senate's body, is responsible for planning and implementing quality assurance measures at university level, as well as for proposing action plans based on survey results, internal evaluations, other forms of self-evaluation and results of external evaluations.

The University maintains good practice and is headed toward continuous enhancement of quality assurance in all segments of work, such as: managing the University, study programmes, lifelong learning, students, professors, external associates, scientific and professional activities, services, premises and equipment.

The following evidence examples were available for consultation during the site visit:

- Statute of the University,
- University Strategy 2014 – 2020,
- University Strategy 2020 – 2026,
- Strategic plan of scientific research,
- Quality Assurance Policy,
- Ordinance on Quality Assurance and Enhancement,
- Quality Assurance Manual,
- Ordinance on Science Promotion,
- Ordinance on Rewards and Acknowledgements,
- Quality assurance board annual reports,
- Report on completion of student evaluation of teaching process,
- Performance analysis of studying (2018/2019),
- Data on seminars and trainings organized for the employees,
- Report on completion of lifelong learning programme evaluation,
- Report on completion of strategic programme of scientific research

Reviewing all these documents, it can be observed that documents cover all areas of university development, from teaching process to scientific and research work, lifelong

learning, international cooperation and mobility, to human and financial resources, and that the University has undergone different activities to assure the internal quality system with all responsibilities defined for the implementation of internal quality assurance system. However, it can also be observed that all of the strategic goals have not been fully realized and have not reached the highest possible level.

Recommendations for improvement

Although the criteria and measures for quality assessment in scientific, educational and, professional activities were established in accordance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), and with particularities of the university scientific, educational and professional processes and the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education, it is recommended, that the institution

- uses various different methods for regular and continuous collecting, monitoring and analysing of all the data on quality,
- monitors regularly continuous professional and didactically-oriented development of all employees together with their work performance.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality.

1.2. The higher education institution implements recommendations for quality improvement from previous evaluations.

Analysis

The Libertas University has undergone the initial external evaluation process in the academic year of 2015/2016 (ASHE report 2016). In accordance with the results and observations of the accreditation board and its report, the University has analysed and implemented most of the recommendations from this accreditation process for improvements and amendments.

Recommendations were the core element for creating the new Strategy of the University, but in addition to this activity, other proposed activities were also implemented, e.g.

- detailed reporting to the Quality Assurance Board about the quality-related activities through annual reports to the University Senate were realized
- various professional trainings, workshops of teachers and administrative staff (ASHE-2017); workshops on quality assurance, re-accreditation, internationalization and quality assurance guidelines – ESG (ASHE-2018); teaching and validating

learning outcomes, challenges students face on the labour market, self-evaluation, quality assurance; our own workshop organized for teaching staff "Learning outcome-centred teaching and assessment"; ASHE-2019: MOZVAG and CROSB; (see in 4.3.),

- co-financed studies for teachers and administrative staff (see in 4.3.)
- the new Ordinance on Quality Assurance and Improvement was adopted, according to which the Senate, the Board, as a Senate's body, and the Office as operational unit are organizational units of quality assurance system.

The report on conducted activities, in accordance with the recommendations of the Panel of experts, was found during the site visit in evidence examples, such as the Re-accreditation Report by the Panel of Experts, December 2015, Ordinance on Quality Assurance and Improvement, Annual reports of the Quality Assurance Board, professional development plan for individual professors, Action plan and reports on its implementation based on previous evaluation recommendations

Recommendations for improvement

- In order to be able to plan further development and to undertake all the activities suggested from the previous accreditation process, the Management of the University should follow regularly and continuously the implementation and improvement process, according to the yearly action plan.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality.

1.3. The higher education institution supports academic integrity and freedom, prevents all types of unethical behaviour, intolerance and discrimination.

Analysis

The Strategy of the University clearly defines strategic goals concerning study programmes, students, scientific work and research, international cooperation, contribution to community and human and financial resource management, based on excellence, innovation, ethics and transparency.

Ethics, tolerance and inclusion are determined by the Code of Ethics and the Ordinance on Employee Conduct and Disciplinary Action. These issues are also regulated by the Ordinance on Study Programmes and Studying, and by University Quality Policy and the Ordinance on Quality Assurance and Improvement.

It should be highlighted that The Code of ethics includes clearly defines procedures for detecting and sanctioning academic dishonesty like plagiarism, academic cheating and forging of results.

In order to implement these principles, the Ethics Committee, the Disciplinary Committee, and the Appeals Board were established. The Students Union also elects students' ombudsperson.

In the period between the beginning of 2016 and the end of 2018, the Ethics Committee conducted 12 disciplinary proceedings. The students' ombudsperson participated in all of them.

Recommendations for improvement

- In order for it to be available to all students and broader public, there should be an online link to the Code of Ethics.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality.

1.4. The higher education institution ensures the availability of information on important aspects of its activities (teaching, scientific/artistic and social).

Analysis

As it is stated in the Self-evaluation Report (pg. 19), the Libertas University regularly informs the public and its stakeholders about their study programmes and other professional activities of the University. Information is publicly displayed in both languages, Croatian and English.

The University communicates with the public via website <https://www.libertas.hr>, Facebook, Instagram, Linked-in and YouTube, where all information relevant for the students, teachers, economy and public can be found.

Important news, such as enrolment applications, enrolment criteria or job vacancies are also published in daily press - Jutarnji list and Večernji list.

Additionally, interviews and reviews of university professors about up-to-date topics from the fields of science and social life are published in magazines and journals regularly.

Recommendations for improvement

- There is a lack of information on co-operation with foreign (European) institutions and programmes organised for prospective students from abroad: more cross-border co-operation (not only with western Balkan countries) with

foreign European educational institutions is recommended to increase the (incoming/outgoing) mobility of students and teachers (not only Dubrovnik).

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality.

1.5. The higher education institution understands and encourages the development of its social role.

Analysis

According to the Self-evaluation Report, the University Strategy emphasises the importance of contact with the community and economy. The importance of public function is highlighted through the following: public responsibility and social sensitivity, the “University being the driver of economic development, a partner and subject ensuring a bilateral transfer of technology and knowledge. Furthermore, the University regards its public function as the driver of the region's transition into a knowledge-based society “(pg. 20 of the SER).

One of the strategic and long-term goals of the Libertas University is to achieve general comprehension and more significant progress in the development of the University and a clear and transparent communication with all stakeholders (students, teachers, entrepreneurs, local community, associations, international societies), all those who may have both direct and indirect benefit from the University.

It has to be highlighted that the separate tuition fund was established, used for co-financing the tuition fees for the students who are unable to fund their studies for medical, personal and other social reasons.

Recommendations for improvement

As the University sees itself as one of the drivers of economic development in the region and has enough potential to be an active partner of the local, regional and national society, more attention should be paid to the

- organization of workshops, special tailor-made lectures, panel discussions and round tables, opened to public in order to meet the societal needs.
- delivery of the educational programmes, offered to different social groups outside the university
- organization of different events for popularisation of science
- organisation of counselling hours, free-of-charge
- delivery of informal educational programmes
- organization of voluntary work and inclusion of broader public into their activities.

In short, more social engagement and voluntary activities are required and recommended (to reach the spill-over).

Quality grade

Minimum level of quality.

1.6. Lifelong learning programmes delivered by the higher education institution are aligned with the strategic goals and the mission of the higher education institution, and social needs.

Analysis

Basic goals for lifelong learning programmes are stated within the mission and the strategic goals. According to the Self-evaluation report, the Libertas University has drawn up a Lifelong Learning Programme within strategic guidelines and established even the special Centre (pg. 22) in order to organize training, workshops and round tables.

Recommendations for improvement

Lifelong learning is an “ongoing, voluntary, and self-motivated” pursuit of knowledge for personal and/or professional reasons. Therefore, it not only enhances social inclusion, active citizenship, and personal development, but also self-sustainability, as well as competitiveness and employability.

The organization of some trainings and courses and seminars should be broadened by the Libertas University and offered to the public, perhaps, for example, with preparation courses for State Matura or self-initiated study courses, designed by some professors. All the additional educational activities and offers should result from the very integration of public into non-formal or informal education, aiming to create ability for continuous lifelong development of quality of life of each individual, being not a part of the regular study programme. All mentioned activities should be carried out systematically and on regular basis.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality.

II. Study programmes

2.1. The general objectives of all study programmes are in line with the mission and strategic goals of the higher education institution and the needs of the society.

Analysis

The HEI proves that the general objectives of all study programmes are in line with the mission and strategic goals of the HEI. Although the SER states that the requirements for the implementation of study programmes Business Economy, Tourism, Physiotherapy, Banking, Insurance and Financial Management are confirmed from the aspect of the labour market, and that data from the Croatian Employment Service show an extremely high employability rate of students who graduated from the University, this is not case for the Physiotherapy study programme, where quotas are not in line with the labour market needs. Justification for the delivery the study programme is partly explained through social/economic needs. Libertas University delivers a Physiotherapy study programme leading to a full-time profession and considers the recommendations of professional associations that monitor its licensing.

Recommendations for improvement

- Alignment of enrolment quotas on the Physiotherapy study programme with the labour market needs
- An increased directing of students toward the international labour market is recommended

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

2.2. The intended learning outcomes at the level of study programmes delivered by the higher education institution are aligned with the level and profile of qualifications gained.

Analysis

The HEI has clearly defined the learning outcomes of the study programmes, which are aligned with the mission and goals of the HEI.

The intended learning outcomes of all study programmes are of the appropriate level. The HEI verifies and ensures the consistency of learning outcomes at the level of the study programme and the course level. The intended learning outcomes of all study programmes are in line with the appropriate levels according to the descriptors of the CROQF levels, except for the Acting study programme, where there is an issue of

aligning the course content with learning outcomes. According to the syllabus seen on the site, the course History of Drama and Theatre has the same syllabus for all three years of the graduate study programme. Also, based on the syllabus, it seems that the content of the course History of Drama and Theatre ends with the theatrical style of *Commedia dell'arte*, which drastically deviates from the stated learning outcomes. At the meeting with the teachers, it was said that the lecturers use the so-called *gavella approach* at the level of method. However, it is not clear how a student obtains theoretical knowledge related to the mentioned method, since the theoretical field related to the work of Dr. Branko Gavella is insufficiently represented in the syllabuses.

When defining learning outcomes, the HEI follows the professional requirements and internationally accepted standards of profession, ensuring that the study programmes are up to date.

Recommendations for improvement:

- Align the contents of the Drama and Theatre History course with the learning outcomes or update the existing inadequate syllabus.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

2.3. The higher education institution provides evidence of the achievement of intended learning outcomes of the study programmes it delivers.

Analysis

Meetings with the Alumni and employers showed that the HEI achieves the intended learning outcomes of the study programmes it delivers, and that the way the study programme model is formed and the expertise of the lecturers based on experience and practice are an advantage that the Alumni recognize upon entering the labour market. At the meeting with the employers, the specificity of University in relation to other HEIs was confirmed; students who have studied at Libertas are quicker to adapt to new circumstances at a random location, to identify problems that arise in practice, and to solve them more easily. Unfortunately, there were no employers from the field of performing or film arts, therefore the Panel did not receive feedback on the achievement of intended learning outcomes.

Also, the Panel did not get an insight into examples of revised learning outcomes, changes in the teaching process, etc.

Recommendations for improvement:

- Rename the course Diplomacy History to History of International Relations.
- Use a citation system agreed on at the University level.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

2.4. The HEI uses feedback from students, employers, professional organisations and alumni in the procedures of planning, proposing and approving new programmes, and revising or closing the existing programmes.

Analysis

Given that the majority of study programmes at Libertas University are largely determined by the dynamics of continuous changes in society and the economy, it is essential that the University improve study programmes based on the recommendations from previous evaluations, as well as on the feedback from students and external stakeholders. In an interview with the Rector, the Vice-Rector for Education, and teaching staff, the Panel came to the conclusion that Libertas took seriously the recommendations from the previous evaluations, i.e. the 2015 Re-accreditation Report.

Within the Acting study programme, suggestions were made regarding the provision of spatial facilities, and significant progress was made (classes are now held at the Museum of Contemporary Art). But certain suggestions – such as that the University Career Centre should be more efficiently involved in organizing professional practice for Acting students and provide them with a better insight into mapping possible employment in the national and international labour markets – have not yet been consistently implemented.

Recommendations for improvement

- A systematic analysis of the introduction of new programmes is required.
- A systematic introduction of stakeholders in the programme revision is required.
- A closer monitoring of the dynamics of intense changes in the labour market, focused on digitization trends, is recommended.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality.

2.5. The higher education institution ensures that ECTS allocation is adequate.

Analysis

Student load is in line with the defined ECTS credits. At the meeting with students, the Panel did not get the impression that there is a disparity between the allocated ECTS credits and the student load on specific study years.

Recommendations for improvement

- A closer monitoring of the student load is recommended.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality.

2.6. Student practice is an integral part of study programmes (where applicable).

Analysis

Although the founder of the University opened a five-star luxury hotel, which is also a teaching base for students of Tourism and Hotel Management, other study programmes also require an organized professional practice, starting with undergraduate studies. At the meeting with Management students, it turned out that there is no practice before the third year of study, which seems inadequate for the University that emphasizes the focus on practical experience as its advantage. The Panel did not gain an insight into the process of verifying the achievement of intended learning outcomes associated with student practice. It is not even clear whether there is a compulsory practice within the study programme of Management.

Recommendations for improvement

- Professional studies require compulsory student practice before the third year of study.
- The introduction of compulsory professional practice as a basis for acquiring the necessary practical knowledge is essential, especially in tourism, but also in other professional fields. In western countries, the professional practice lasts for the entire semester (usually third/fourth), i.e. 15 weeks (30 ECTS credits).
- Practice is recommended for other/regular studies as well.

Quality grade

Minimum level of quality.

III. Teaching process and student support

3.1. Admission criteria or criteria for the continuation of studies are in line with the requirements of the study programme, clearly defined, published and consistently applied.

Analysis

The requirements for enrolment or continuation of studies are in line with the study programme requirements; they are clear, publicly available, and consistently applied. Accordingly, an improvement was observed in the form of implementation of the recommendation from the previous re-accreditation process and the criteria for enrolment or continuation of studies were publicly announced on the University website. The website provides information on study programmes with all relevant information (curricula, learning outcomes, enrolment information) and enrolment criteria for individual study programmes. When enrolling in specific programmes, the results of the state graduation exam are considered, and if they are not available, the results of the entrance exam are applied. Procedures are clearly defined for situations where prior learning needs to be recognized. In confirmation, the Panel was presented with a couple of documented examples.

Recommendations for improvement

- As one of the enrolment criteria, entrance exam results are considered in addition to state graduation exam results. When testing Croatian language skills, it is advisable to test literacy and written presentation with an essay on a given topic.
- Specifically for the Acting study programme, a longer duration of assessment of knowledge, skills, and group dynamics is recommended.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality.

3.2. The higher education institution gathers and analyses information on student progress and uses it to ensure the continuity and completion of study.

Analysis

Although the Panel was informed during the meeting (verbally) that the drop-out rate for the last five years was about 20%, no detailed analysis was provided on the regular monitoring of student progress. When examining the documentation, the data on average student grades on individual study programmes for the previous three years

were presented. In the SER, some data were also provided (from 2016 to 2018, it was found that the average grade in the study was 3.43. Similarly, the success of students in graduate professional studies in the same period indicates 3.31. On the other hand, the success at undergraduate university studies in the observed period is 3.77. The success at the graduate university studies is 3.82. During the re-accreditation process, the Panel did not receive an insight into the activities initiated and carried out on the basis of the analysed successes and student passing rates.

Recommendations for improvement

- The Panel recommends the establishment of an effective mechanism for analysing student success and passing rates, defining minimum satisfactory levels of success and passing rates, including appropriate activities based on them (if necessary).

Quality grade

Minimum level of quality.

3.3. The higher education institution ensures student-centred learning.

Analysis

At the meetings with teachers and students, the Panel was informed about different ways of teaching in order to motivate students to participate in class and to better understand the learning content. Some of the aforementioned methods are case studies, debates on individual learning topics, group work, etc. A document outlining examples of the use of teaching methods and reports on the procedures for evaluating teaching methods was also provided. In order to improve teaching (methods), lecturers and professors attended various trainings on the subject. In order to adapt to students who, in addition to studying, also work (part-time students) and help them acquire the required knowledge, a smaller compulsory attendance of 30% was defined for them. Projectors, computers, and the Internet are used to modernize the classroom. All course materials and announcements related to each course are available to students through the university's internal network.

Recommendations for improvement

- The institution should intensify the programme and focus mostly on full-time students, less on part-time students, since the generation gap will ask for a higher level of competition on the job market.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality.

3.4. The higher education institution ensures adequate student support.

Analysis

Support for students is adapted to the diverse student population: part-time students, senior students, foreign students (still rare, unfortunately), students from under-represented and vulnerable groups, students with certain learning and study progress difficulties.

Through the work of Career Centre, the University provides studying and psychological counselling, as well as career counselling for students. At the beginning of each year, staff from the Career Centre introduce themselves to students and inform them about their work. They advise the students on the need of taking a serious approach to studying, and inform them on the later options available to them. Also, if a student chooses to go attend practice, whether national or international, the Career Centre staff assists and advises them in writing CVs, motivation letters, and resumes, and guides them through the process. Since there are outgoing and incoming mobility programmes, students have all the necessary help in this field provided at the University by the person in charge. The Student Council, which represents the rights and needs of students, and assists and advises them when needed, present themselves at the first lectures with first year students and provide them with assistance when needed.

Recommendations for improvement

- A better connection of the Career Centre with the performing arts labour market is recommended, as well as a better ensuring of information related to the acting career development.

Quality grade

High level of quality.

3.5. The higher education institution ensures support to students from vulnerable and under-represented groups.

Analysis

In case of any issues or questions, students first address the Student Affairs Office, which is open to students every working day from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. If necessary, the Office refers them to other services (Career Centre, international exchange Centre etc.). The University website shows that there is a students' counselling Centre offering

support in overcoming certain difficulties associated with learning and adapting to student lifestyle. The University supports all under-represented groups. For students whose parents have lower levels of education and, consequently, lower income, the University offers scholarships. In the 2019/2020 academic year, a scholarship fund of HRK 500,000 for Libertas students at undergraduate university and professional studies was available. The scholarships cover all or part of the costs of the chosen study programme at Libertas University. For part-time students, the percentage of compulsory class attendance is adjusted to their abilities (30%), which is less than that of full-time students (70%).

Recommendations for improvement

- A recommendation is to establish a systematic approach to address the needs of vulnerable students and under-represented groups within the study programme, which would enhance the social development and study progress of these groups.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality.

3.6. The higher education institution allows students to gain international experience.

Analysis

The University Office for International Cooperation promotes various international activities with emphasis on international mobility of students, teachers, researchers, and non-teaching staff.

The University enables the mobility of students through the ERASMUS+ programme and currently has 30 cooperation agreements signed with 15 countries. In the last three academic years, the number of outgoing students in the international exchange was 53. At the same time, the number of incoming students from other international HEIs was 72 within the ERASMUS programme and 47 from the USA. The number of outgoing and incoming students is constantly increasing, based on student satisfaction and positive experiences.

Information related to the ERASMUS+ programme is also available on the University website. If a student chooses to participate in the programme, the University offers them all the necessary help and information through the Centre for International Cooperation. Also, before leaving, the University conducts language checks if deemed

necessary and advises students to learn the local language during the ERASMUS+ programme. With regard to the recognition of ECTS credits earned at another university, the University provides all information on ECTS credits before applying to the programme.

Recommendations for improvement

- The studies of international relations (diplomacy) and international business should be expanded with the process of creating competencies required to work in an international environment.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality.

3.7. The higher education institution ensures adequate study conditions for foreign students.

Analysis

All the necessary information on the possibilities of enrolment and studying is available to foreign students in a foreign language on the University website.

In the last five academic years, the total number of incoming students in the international exchange was 129 students, who spent more than 3 months in Croatia.

The University conducts satisfaction surveys for the incoming students. Foreign students have the opportunity to attend classes in English in Dubrovnik, while in Zagreb this is available only within a limited number of courses. Classes for foreign students coming to Zagreb are mostly consultative in nature. The University provides the possibility of learning Croatian for foreign students.

Recommendations for improvement

- Although in Dubrovnik the entire programme is delivered in English, enabling the inclusion of foreign students in classes, the classes in Zagreb are organized in a consultative manner for foreign students. Due to the above, the Panel recommends an introduction of comprehensive programmes or at least several courses to be delivered in English in Zagreb.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality.

3.8. The higher education institution ensures an objective and consistent evaluation and assessment of student achievements.

Analysis

In the first lecture of certain courses, prior to the beginning of teaching, teachers inform students about their course obligations and the requirements for obtaining specific grades. The University allows for grading objectivity, consistent with learning that results in examinations. The grading scale on examinations is the same for all courses, and refers to all student obligations assigned by a particular teacher (revision tests, written exam, oral exam, etc.). If a student is not satisfied with the grade and believes that the teacher has made a mistake in his or her grade assessment, the student is able to check the graded exam together with the teacher in the case of any ambiguity. In this way, students are given the opportunity to control the teacher in a way and correct any subjectivity in their assessment.

Recommendations for improvement

- Recently, the grading according to learning outcomes has been introduced, and it is the recommendation of the Panel to monitor the assessment and the efficiency of such grading system. With the aim of better objectivity while grading, approbation implementation is recommended.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality.

3.9. The higher education institution issues diplomas and Diploma Supplements in accordance with the relevant regulations.

Analysis

Following an insight into diplomas, the Panel has confirmed that, upon graduation, students are issued a diploma and diploma supplement relevant to the study programme. The said documents are issued with regard to all relevant regulations. The University issues the diploma and diploma supplement of the study programme in Croatian and English with no charge.

Recommendations for improvement

- Continue with the good practice.

Quality grade

High level of quality

3.10. The higher education institution is committed to the employability of graduates.

Analysis

With the help of the Career Centre, students can get support in planning their future careers at any time. The Centre provides students with advice on the administrative part of applying for professional internships and, after graduation, for future work. The advice relates to writing of CVs, motivation letters, and all other necessary application data for a particular job/internship. Within the University, there is an ALUMNI group that organizes various informal and formal gatherings during the year, and contributes to maintaining contact between the University and its former students. At the very beginning of the academic year, the Career Centre staff come to freshman class to introduce first-year students with the work of the Centre and everything else needed for a successful cooperation.

Recommendations for improvement

- The University is recommended to set up a monitoring mechanism for student employment, in order to be able to determine which professions are the most employable and in which there may be difficulties. If these difficulties are caused by certain of the deficiencies during the studies, the University will be able to improve them, from which both the students and the University will benefit.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality.

IV. Teaching and institutional capacities

4.1. The higher education institution ensures adequate teaching capacities.

Analysis

The HEI has a sufficient number of full-time teachers: 10 professors with tenure, 8 professors, 9 associate professors, 18 assistant professors, 30 teachers appointed to teaching grades, and 5 teaching assistants. According to the analysis, such a high number of full-time teachers fulfils the condition for the coverage of teaching by the HEI's own staff, both in professional (more than 33%) and in university (50%) study programmes, even though the average age between full-time professors with tenure

and full professors is high. Based on the basic data of the portfolio of each teacher (only those with research-teaching grades) who participate in teaching the undergraduate study programme Physiotherapy, it is evident that there are no full-time employees that are teachers in the field of Physiotherapy. The related clinical exercises are performed and/or supervised by the research-teaching staff from the teaching bases with part-time employment at Libertas University. It is also evident that some courses, especially preclinical ones, are taught by teachers without qualifications required for the courses they teach (for instance, Anatomy).

According to the analysis of the delivery conditions, the ratio of students and full-time teachers at the HEI is 1.25, which is acceptable. The teachers' workload is also in accordance with current laws and regulations, acts of the competent bodies of the University, collective agreements, etc.

The workload of teachers ensures a balanced distribution of basic teaching and scientific work, as well as the possibility of personal development and acceptance of the necessary administrative obligations.

When compared to the previous re-accreditation process, progress is evident, especially the increase in the number of full-time teachers appointed to research-teaching grades and in the increase of the number of professional and scientific papers.

Recommendations for improvement

- Continue recruiting new research-teaching staff, especially from younger age groups.
- Accelerate the admission into full-time employment for the teachers in the relevant research-teaching field to which a course they (co)instruct belongs, to ensure adequate competencies and learning outcomes for the students.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality.

4.2. Teacher recruitment, advancement and re-appointment is based on objective and transparent procedures which include the evaluation of excellence.

Analysis

Teacher recruitment procedures are mainly based on the aim of the Libertas University's development, and are in line with current legislation and internal acts. The selection, appointment, and evaluation of teachers generally take into account their previous activities, which cannot be said, or it is at least not evident, in the offered examples of evidence for the prescribed competitive criteria for candidates' excellence.

Despite the large number of examples of evidence in the re-accreditation process (Section 4.2.), the procedures for the promotion of teachers to higher grades are not adequately taking into account important achievements in terms of significant scientific discoveries, successful projects, prestigious publications, etc. The situation is better regarding a successful securing of additional funding, mentoring, supervising final and graduate papers, and producing teaching materials and textbooks.

Recommendations for improvement

- Implement teacher recruitment procedures more consistently according to the development goals of the HEI
- Take more into account the results of teachers' previous research activities and feedback from students.
- It is also suggested to prescribe additional competitive criteria when selecting candidates, to increase the level of excellence, and with the aim of improving the quality and competencies of research-teaching staff.

Quality grade

Minimum level of quality.

4.3. The higher education institution provides support to teachers in their professional development.

Analysis

The presented plan for the teachers' professional development (available in the re-accreditation process) is too general and inapplicable in the practical work and development of teacher competencies at Libertas University level. Nevertheless, the HEI encourages evaluation and improvement of teaching competencies due to efforts of the University management, and the assessment of the quality of teaching performance based on the student evaluation results of the teachers' work. Teachers do not participate sufficiently in international mobility programmes nor in collaborative projects.

Recommendations for improvement

- Further professional development of teachers should be encouraged, as well as the use of sabbatical (free study year).
- Research visits abroad and stronger direction of teachers in the specialized areas of Libertas' particular study programmes.

- It is also necessary to further encourage teachers to write scientific papers in journals with a higher impact factor, and to publish them on the University website.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality.

4.4. The space, equipment and the entire infrastructure (laboratories, IT services, work facilities etc.) are appropriate for the delivery of study programmes, ensuring the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and the implementation of scientific/artistic activity.

Analysis

The space, equipment, and the entire infrastructure are suitable for the delivery of the study programmes, ensuring the achievement of intended learning outcomes, and the implementation of scientific/artistic activity. The review of resources during the site-visit to the HEI revealed a high-quality space, equipment, and infrastructure. During the meeting with the Management, the Panel gained additional insight into their efforts for continuous improvement of all infrastructural contents that are otherwise at a very enviable technological level. This has allowed for a very comfortable working environment for teachers, both at the level of shared infrastructural equipment, as well as the teachers' offices and student rooms. The University currently uses its own 19 lecture halls with 1000 seats, a conference room with the possibility of online-learning, an IT room, a well-designed library, a highly equipped student affairs office, students' club, and as many as 34 teacher offices. Dislocated units at Dubrovnik and Kutina are also well-equipped. One student is provided with 1.25 m² of usable space, and students can use the IT equipment both during working hours and outside class time, without restrictions or fees (about 50 computers are available to students). On top of that, there is an up-to-date software on the equipment for performing the entire teaching and administrative processes by implementing EduNet app solution. This state-of-the-art integrated information system facilitates managing students throughout their education.

Recommendations for improvement

- Continue developing the HEI's resources.
- Maintain IT equipment regularly and monitor the introduction of new technologies.
- Increase all infrastructure capacities in accordance with the potential increase in the number of students.

Quality grade

High level of quality.

4.5. The library and library equipment, including the access to additional resources, ensure the availability of literature and other resources necessary for a high-quality study, research and teaching.

Analysis

A 100 m² large University library with available seats and networked computers for searching databases has a large stock of bibliographic material in line with needs of the University study programmes, ensuring the required quality of study. Moreover, it is a common practice (which is not the case at other universities) to ensure the examination literature to students at the beginning of each academic year. The final papers, graduate theses, specialist and doctoral theses are duly entered into the institutional repository.

Recommendations for improvement

- Given the number of students, it would be good to increase the library area and provide more textbooks of the University teachers.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality.

4.6. The higher education institution rationally manages its financial resources.

Analysis

Following the meeting with the University Management and an overview of all infrastructure contents of the University at its Zagreb headquarters, the Panel has concluded that the HEI, i.e. its Management, rationally procures, uses, and manages its financial resources. This ensures financial sustainability and efficiency that is evident in all areas of the HEI's activity. All that is done in a transparent and efficient manner, and additional funding is used to develop and improve Libertas.

Recommendations for improvement

- Continue with the well-established practice of rational procurement and management of financial resources.

Quality grade

High level of quality.

V. Scientific/artistic activity

5.1. Teachers and associates employed at the higher education institution are committed to the achievement of high quality and quantity of scientific research.

Analysis

University professors and the University team and associates are committed to the scientific and educational excellence.

According to Analytic supplement (5.1) the scientific outcome is as follows:

Publications of the highest category according to the Ordinance on Appointment to Scientific Grades	In total 149
Other publications according to the Ordinance on Appointment to Scientific Grades	In total 222
Authorship of books published abroad	In total 1
Authorship of books published in Croatia	In total 6
Chapters in books	In total 45
Editorship of books	In total 2
Professional papers	In total 79
Peer-reviewed publications from scientific and Professional events/conferences/in, proceedings of scientific conferences	In total 153

According to table 4.3. (analytic supplement), full-time professors, teachers and associates (36 full professors/scientists of social sciences: economics, politics, social work, 10 for medicine/biomedicine and 2 for art sciences) are committed to their scientific work and take part at conferences, as the university has efficient procedures for encouraging them for writing research papers.

The University tries to overcome some issues that arise from the specific position of the Libertas University (being the private university, combining university and vocational studies etc.) in the Croatian system. Regardless of the commitment, which is visible, there are some imbalances that the University should deal with. Firstly, regarding the number of publications, it is evident that Libertas University scores behind the national scores. Libertas publication score meets the national (which is also poor comparing to the comparative countries) only in the case of WoS/SSCI/Scopus publications. In all other cases, Libertas is falling behind the national score. This can be attributed, according to our observation, to some partially also externally-driven factors: many professors with a permanent position and just few young professors that have to gain the same position; the low level of required publications for the election

to the professorship; language barrier etc. Nevertheless, we urge that Libertas invests more in the process of scientific excellence (seen as publishing in the top-ranked world journals). We agree that this will be partially enhanced by the Strategy of Scientific Excellence 2019 – 2023 and by the financial incentives, but at the same time we ask for a greater commitment of the leadership that should invest more in establishing the collective culture that publishing is a necessity and not a choice.

The second remark that is more positive is that the PhDs of future collaborators are to be mostly defended outside the University. This means that the University decided to enhance the circulation of knowledge with other universities/faculties in Zagreb and further. However, we would like to emphasise that the University should invest more in cross-border (not only national) cooperation. What we lacked here is the list of university teachers that participated in international conferences.

Recommendations for improvement

- Enhance the coupling with international authorship that will help increase the publication in top journals;
- Invest more in the climate at the University that will help younger colleagues to understand that research is a constitutive part of teaching. Only a good researcher can be a good teacher.
- Increase the quotation in the WoS/Scopus of articles not published in Croatian.
- Increase the participation of professors at international conferences outside Croatia.

Quality grade

Minimum level of quality.

5.2. The higher education institution provides evidence for the social relevance of its scientific / artistic / professional research and transfer of knowledge.

Analysis

The University is embedded in the milieu in which it works. What was seen from figures and discussions is that the University cares about the employability of their graduates. However, what it seems is that the link between the future employees and the employers is based on personal relations of the leadership. There is nothing wrong with this per se, however, what can be problematic in the future is that with a change in the leadership there can be some issues regarding the future of students (later employees). Thus, we recommend that the University empowers the Career Centre, which should use more standardised procedures and maybe a more tailor-made

approach. When finding appropriate people for a post is a challenge, the standardisation of processes can help the University to overcome possible future pitfalls. At this point we would like to mention also the positive approach of the leadership towards co-financing intra-University research projects. This is a good practice that should be retained and at the same time reinforced. What we would like to suggest is that the University should maybe diversify this practice in a way that the intra-University projects would have also an extra-University impact. Thus, we would suggest to support intra-University projects financially, but the research teams, which are now mostly built by professors and cooperants from the Libertas University, should expand and also include some other stakeholders, maybe from competitive universities, who can become partners (instead of competitors).

Recommendations for improvement

- Increase of financial support coming from outside the University.
- Establish better and stronger connections with partners in Zagreb and around Croatia, also cross-border partnership with Slovenia, Hungary, Serbia, Italy, and Austria.
- Increase visibility of professors from Libertas in media, activities related to public opinion etc.

Quality grade

High level of quality.

5.3. Scientific/artistic and professional achievements of the higher education institution are recognized in the regional, national and international context.

Analysis

The Libertas University is a young and a small university, therefore it could not be expected that it will receive lots of national and international prizes and awards. The data that were accessible presented some of the achievements of the people that work at Libertas, but mostly they were not awarded in the time when they were part of Libertas staff (e.g. Stavljenić Rukavina, 2006). However here some shifts should be done. We expect that the situation will be better after the younger generation, being employed on Libertas, would engage more in the process of organizational evolution and development. This would bring more international projects, awards and recognition, invited lectures etc. Nevertheless, already at this point we strongly emphasise that Libertas should engage more proactively in the Erasmus+ system and also that professors from Libertas invest more in their participation in international conferences.

Recommendations for improvement

- Increase the number of younger professors, researchers at the first stage of their careers
- Develop an internal system of supporting scientific excellence, including PR activities for the promotion of the University and of the professors and their knowledge
- Invest more in applying for EU projects, where the competition is quite harsh and this can help to evolve in the research excellence.

Quality grade

Minimum level of quality.

5.4. The scientific/artistic activity of the higher education institution is both sustainable and developmental.

Analysis

The above-mentioned deficiencies are already addressed by the University Strategy 2019-2023, which focuses on the increased level of scientific excellence. We agree that the decision of the University to adopt such document was an appropriate decision, but what lacks in the document is the system of evaluation.

Recommendations for improvement

- A more developed approach of evaluation of scientific excellence.
- A greater embeddedness in international projects.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality.

5.5. Scientific/artistic and professional activities and achievements of the higher education institution improve the teaching process.

Analysis

The Libertas University presented quite well the cooperation of students in the research process; what was missing was the presentation of the transfer of research results into the educational process. What is to be supervised is that the collaboration of students and professors does not create issues related to authorship of articles. Here we would ask for a detailed regulation of authorship when collaboration between

students and professors is taking place (such as criteria defining who is the first author, who is the second author etc.)

The strengthening of the teaching system relies also on the premises. We determined that the premises are quite well and well equipped. What is a problem is the size of the library and also the number of books. Since this HEI is growing, we would recommend to increase the number of books and other scientific materials in the library, which would cause also the enlargement of the library. Nowadays students still study in libraries, therefore this library would need a reading room and also some space for group work etc.

Finally, since Libertas is a young university, we can rely on the data available about PhD etc., but we would like to emphasise the necessity of establishing a strong PhD study, which will be a decisive factor of the future development of Libertas.

Recommendations for improvement

- Increase space capacities in the library, establish a reading room.
- Define the relations in authorship in student/professor collaboration;
- Present more clearly the translation of scientific achievements to the education/learning process.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality.

APPENDICES

1. Quality assessment summary – tables

<i>Quality grade by assessment area</i>				
<i>Assessment area</i>	Unsatisfactory level of quality	Minimum level of quality	Satisfactory level of quality	High level of quality
<i>I. Internal quality assurance and the social role of the higher education institution</i>			X	
<i>II. Study programmes</i>			X	
<i>III. Teaching process and student support</i>			X	
<i>IV. Teaching and institutional capacities</i>			X	
<i>V. Scientific/artistic activity</i>		X		

Quality grade by standard

<i>I. Internal quality assurance and the social role of the higher education institution</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>Minimum level of quality</i>	<i>Satisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>High level of quality</i>
1.1. The higher education institution has established a functional internal quality assurance system.			X	
1.2. The higher education institution implements recommendations for quality improvement from previous evaluations.			X	
1.3. The higher education institution supports academic integrity and freedom, prevents all types of unethical behaviour, intolerance and discrimination.			X	
1.4. The higher education institution ensures the availability of information on important aspects of its activities (teaching, scientific/artistic and social).			X	
1.5. The higher education institution understands and encourages the development of its social role.		X		
1.6. Lifelong learning programmes delivered by the higher education institution are aligned with the strategic goals and the mission of the higher education institution, and social needs.			X	

Quality grade by standard

<i>II. Study programmes</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>Minimum level of quality</i>	<i>Satisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>High level of quality</i>
2.1. The general objectives of all study programmes are in line with the mission and strategic goals of the higher education institution and the needs of the society.			X	
2.2. The intended learning outcomes at the level of study programmes delivered by the higher education institution are aligned with the level and profile of qualifications gained.			X	
2.3. The higher education institution provides evidence of the achievement of intended learning outcomes of the study programmes it delivers.			X	
2.4. The HEI uses feedback from students, employers, professional organisations and alumni in the procedures of planning, proposing and approving new programmes, and revising or closing the existing programmes.			X	
2.5. The higher education institution ensures that ECTS allocation is adequate.			X	
2.6. Student practice is an integral part of study programmes (where applicable).		X		

Quality grade by standard

<i>III. Teaching process and student support</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>Minimum level of quality</i>	<i>Satisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>High level of quality</i>
3.1. Admission criteria or criteria for the continuation of studies are in line with the requirements of the study programme, clearly defined, published and consistently applied.			X	
3.2. The higher education institution gathers and analyses information on student progress and uses it to ensure the continuity and completion of study.		X		
3.3. The higher education institution ensures student-Centred learning.			X	
3.4. The higher education institution ensures adequate student support.				X
3.5. The higher education institution ensures support to students from vulnerable and under-represented groups.			X	
3.6. The higher education institution allows students to gain international experience.			X	
3.7. The higher education institution ensures adequate study conditions for foreign students.			X	
3.8. The higher education institution ensures an objective and consistent evaluation and assessment of student achievements.			X	
3.9. The higher education institution issues diplomas and Diploma Supplements in accordance with the relevant regulations.				X
3.10. The higher education institution is committed to the employability of graduates.			X	

Quality grade by standard

<i>IV. Teaching and institutional capacities</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>Minimum level of quality</i>	<i>Satisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>High level of quality</i>
4.1. The higher education institution ensures adequate teaching capacities.			X	
4.2. Teacher recruitment, advancement and re-appointment is based on objective and transparent procedures which include the evaluation of excellence.		X		
4.3. The higher education institution provides support to teachers in their professional development.			X	
4.4. The space, equipment and the entire infrastructure (laboratories, IT services, work facilities etc.) are appropriate for the delivery of study programmes, ensuring the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and the implementation of scientific/artistic activity.				X
4.5. The library and library equipment, including the access to additional resources, ensure the availability of literature and other resources necessary for a high-quality study, research and teaching.			X	
4.6. The higher education institution rationally manages its financial resources.				X

Quality grade by standard

<i>V. Scientific/artistic activity</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>Minimum level of quality</i>	<i>Satisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>High level of quality</i>
5.1. Teachers and associates employed at the higher education institution are committed to the achievement of high quality and quantity of scientific research.		X		
5.2. The higher education institution provides evidence for the social relevance of its scientific / artistic / professional research and transfer of knowledge.				X
5.3. Scientific/artistic and professional achievements of the higher education institution are recognized in the regional, national and international context.		X		
5.4. The scientific / artistic activity of the higher education institution is both sustainable and developmental.			X	
5.5. Scientific/artistic and professional activities and achievements of the higher education institution improve the teaching process.			X	

2. Site visit protocol

PROTOKOL POSJETA/SITE VISIT PROTOCOL

Utorak, 19. studenoga 2019./
Tuesday, 19th November 2019

11:00 – 11:30 Edukacija članova stručnog povjerenstva – kratko predstavljanje Agencije, upoznavanje sa sustavom visokog obrazovanja u Republici Hrvatskoj/ Training for the expert panel members – short presentation of ASHE, introduction to the higher education system in Croatia

11:30 – 12:00 Edukacija članova stručnog povjerenstva – upoznavanje s Postupkom reakreditacije, Standardima za vrednovanje kvalitete, pisanjem završnog izvješća/ Training for the expert panel members – introduction to the reaccreditation procedure, standards for the evaluation of quality and writing the final report

12:00 – 12:30 Pauza/Break

12:30 – 17:00 Priprema povjerenstva za posjet Sveučilištu (rad na samoanalizi)/Preparation of the expert panel members for the site visit (working on the Self-evaluation)

Srijeda, 20. studenoga 2019./
Wednesday, 20th November 2019

9:00 – 10:00 Sastanak s rektorom, prorektorima i dekanima (*bez prezentacija*)/Meeting with the rector, vice rectors and deans (*no presentations*)

10:00 – 10:15 *Interni sastanak članova Stručnog povjerenstva / Internal meeting of the panel members*

10:15 – 11:00 Sastanak s radnom grupom koja je priredila Samoanalizu i voditeljem kvalitete /Meeting with the working group* that compiled the Self-Evaluation and Head of the Committee for quality

11:00 – 12:00 *Sastanak članova Stručnog povjerenstva (Analiza dokumenata)/Internal meeting of the panel members (Document analysis)*

12:00 – 13:00 Sastanak sa studentima (otvoren sastanak za sve studente) / Meeting with the students (open meeting)

13:00 – 14:30 *Radni ručak Stručnog povjerenstva/Working lunch*

14:30 – 15:15 *Sastanak s Alumnima / Meeting with the Alumni*

15:15 – 16:00 Sastanak s vanjskim dionicima - predstavnicima strukovnih i profesionalnih udruženja, poslovna zajednica/poslodavci, stručnjaci iz prakse, organizacijama civilnog društva, vanjski predavači/Meeting with external stakeholders -representatives of professional organisations, business sector/industry sector, professional experts, non-governmental organisations, external lecturers

16:00 - 17:00 Organizacija dodatnog sastanka o mogućim otvorenim pitanjima prema potrebi / Organisation of additional meeting on potential open questions if it is needed

17:30 – 20:00 Sastanak Stručnog povjerenstva – refleksija o viđenom i priprema za idući dan posjeta/Joint meeting of the expert panel members – reflection on the day and preparation for the second day of the site visit

**Četvrtak, 21. studenoga 2019./
Thursday, 21th November 2019**

9:00 – 9:45 Sastanak s voditeljima studijskih programa / Meeting with the heads of study programmes

9:45 – 11:15 *Sastanak članova Stručnog povjerenstva (**Analiza dokumenata**)/Internal meeting of the panel members (**Document analysis**)*

11:15 – 12:00 Sastanak s nastavnicima (u stalnom radnom odnosu, nisu na rukovodećim mjestima) / Meeting with full-time employed teachers (open meeting)

12:00 – 12:45 Sastanak s prorektorom za znanost i međunarodnu suradnju /Meeting with vice rector for research and international cooperation

12:45 – 14:15 *Radni ručak članova Stručnog povjerenstva/Working lunch*

14:15–15:45 Obilazak Fakulteta (knjižnica, uredi studentskih službi, ured međunarodne suradnje, informatička služba, učionice, Centar za karijere, Centar za cjeloživotno učenje) i prisustvovanje nastavi/Tour of the Faculty (library, student services, international office, IT services, classrooms, carrier Centre, Centre for LLL) and participation in teaching classes

15:45 – 16:15 Organizacija dodatnog sastanka o mogućim otvorenim pitanjima prema potrebi / Organisation of additional meeting on potential open questions if it is needed

16:15 - 16:45 *Sastanak članova Stručnog povjerenstva/Internal meeting of the panel members*

16:45 - 17:00 Završni sastanak s rektrom, prorektorima i dekanima/Exit meeting with the rector, vice rector and deans

17:30 - 20:00 Sastanak Stručnog povjerenstva – refleksija o viđenom i priprema za idući dan posjeta/Joint meeting of the expert panel members – reflection on the day and preparation for the second day of the site visit

**Petak, 22. studenoga 2019./
Friday, 22nd November 2019**

9:30 - 13:00 Sastanak Stručnog povjerenstva - Izrada nacрта završnog izvješća i rad na dokumentu Standardi za vrednovanje kvalitete / Joint meeting of the expert panel members - Drafting the final report and working on the document Standards for the evaluation of quality.

SUMMARY

The Expert Panel conducted a site visit on 20-21 November, 2019 to the Libertas University, Zagreb. In addition to the Self-analysis report prepared by the Management of the University in advance, the Panel was provided with additional information during the site visit. In this way, an “inside perspective” via the monitoring processes was purposefully complemented by an “outside perspective”. The site visit aimed to provide the evaluation of the University and all of its responsibilities (research, teaching, promotion of young researchers, internationalisation, and the guarantee of equal opportunity), and focused on the development of its profile and strategy. The conceptual design of the study programmes was given particular attention.

In the course of a two-day visit, the evaluation team met with various status groups (see the visit protocol attached) and summarises the key results and findings in a report as follows.

The **following commendations (key strengths)**, referring to a particularly significant achievements by the education provider Libertas with regard to its study programmes offered, have been made:

1. The Libertas University is a private, not-for-profit tertiary educational institution.
2. Its mission, vision, strategy, and resources are dedicated to serving mostly Croatia.
3. Strong and consistent mission and vision is commended: Libertas University has remained dedicated to providing relevant, tailor-made education to anyone with the desire to learn. This remains a key driver for programmes and services that the institution offers.
4. HEI is commended for carrying out the university-wide monitoring process, as it engages in regular, systematic, participatory, self-reflective, and evidence-based assessment of its accomplishments.
5. In the spirit of transparency, University includes information about its mission, values, vision, core themes on the web site, available to the broad public.
6. As a small and cohesive university, it utilizes a number of reporting processes to track its performance.
7. Practitioner-university model: the Libertas University embraces the use of academically-qualified practitioners as its faculties allow students to learn from industry professionals that teach what they do for a living.
8. The self-reflection presented in its report has provided the staff and faculty with an opportunity to examine and better understand the effectiveness of its programmes and strategic goals.

9. The University continues to demonstrate fiscal responsibility by carefully planning and implementing sound budgets that allow the institution to pursue and fulfil its mission, vision and core themes in a sustainable manner.

In order to benefit through improvements, the **following recommendations** (areas of focus) made by the evaluation team refer to a course of actions that should be considered by the Libertas University to improve the delivery and/or outcomes of their educational programmes until the next accreditation:

1. University is focused mostly on the Croatian region, but should encourage more international students/partnerships and should enhance the support international mobility of students and teachers. International students bring global perspectives that are shared with national students. University professors who teach abroad are able to bring a higher level of internationalization to all of their courses.
2. The institution should focus on academic and scientific quality: academic quality and scientific excellence should remain a significant concern for the institution
3. Institution has made great strides in the past years with the development of study programmes at all levels, but neglected the importance of scientific publications in foreign languages and foreign high ranked journals and the overall scientific activity of its teachers/professors.
4. The University should focus more on connections to the community: it should continue to build its relationship with students, businesses, and other (esp. international) education providers.
5. A number of socially responsible projects, lectures, workshops, supporting the needs of the broader community need to be pushed forward.

If Libertas University continues to seriously address a number of areas outlined in this report, it is committed to

- ensuring engagement of students;
- improvement of study programmes;
- accountability of the University;
- and continuous quality improvement,

all of which will be needed to lead the institution toward a higher level of mission fulfilment.